

J. Sergeant

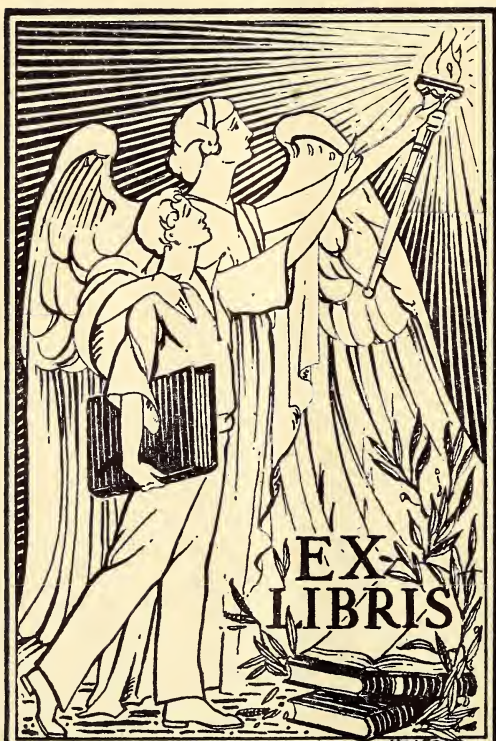
REPORT
ON
THE FIRST
EUROPEAN CONGRESS
OF THE
DIRECTORS AND INSTRUCTORS
OF
INSTITUTIONS FOR THE BLIND,
HELD AT
VIENNA,
AUGUST, 1873.



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AMERICAN FOUNDATION
FOR THE BLIND INC.

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TO THE
MANAGING COMMITTEE
OF THE
YORKSHIRE
SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND.

Gentlemen,

At your monthly meeting in June, 1873, I was appointed your delegate to the Congress of Superintendents and Teachers of Institutions for the Blind to be held at Vienna in the following August; and you further directed me, to call on my way to Vienna and visit the Institution for the Blind recently founded at Upper Norwood, near London. Whilst in Vienna, I also took an opportunity of inspecting the articles from various Institutions for the Blind, which had been sent to the great World Exhibition held in that City last year; I have the honour therefore of submitting the following report, which has reference to the above three objects, viz.

1. THE ROYAL NORMAL COLLEGE AND ACADEMY of MUSIC for the Blind, Upper Norwood.

2. THE ARTICLES from the INSTITUTIONS FOR THE BLIND exhibited in the World Exhibition of 1873 at Vienna.

3. THE CONGRESS of SUPERINTENDENTS AND TEACHERS of Institutions for the Blind, held at Vienna in August, 1873.

I visited the Royal College at Norwood on the 26th of July. At present it is held in two houses close to the Crystal Palace. The Superintendent, Mr. Campbell, was absent on the morning when I called; but the Teachers gave me all the information which I asked for and seemed desirous to shew me fully the working of the Institution.

The number of pupils, male and female, was about 40, their ages varying from 10 to 18 years. The staff of Teachers consists of the Superintendent, Mr. Campbell (blind), two female teachers for general education, one male teacher of tuning (blind), and one female teacher of music (blind.) Mr. Campbell and all his teachers are natives of the United States of America. The two female teachers examined, in my presence, two classes, each consisting of boys and girls, in Mental Arithmetic (Vulgar Fractions,) Geography (England), and Physiology, and the pupils acquitted themselves well. English History, English Grammar, and Gymnastics are also taught and it is proposed to commence at once the additional subjects of Natural Philosophy, Algebra, Geometry, and Modern languages.

Music is the chief feature in the work of the Institution, including the teaching of Pianoforte tuning. Some of the pupils played some exercises for me on the piano, and, for the time during which they had been under musical instruction, I should judge, that they had made good progress.

The teaching of tuning seems to have great pains bestowed upon it. Sections of the actions of pianofortes and all the various sorts of pianofortes are provided for the pupils, so that they may become fully acquainted with the different forms of instruments likely to be met with.

In the general teaching of the school I did not perceive,

that there were any methods adopted, which would not be used by good teachers in English Schools.

The pupils were from Edinburgh, Glasgow, and various parts of England, and I should suppose that they are some of the cleverest pupils out of the various schools from which they have been sent. The Committee of the College hope to render the Institution useful in this way, viz., by drawing the most intelligent of the pupils with musical ability from the various provincial schools; and undoubtedly when a school is too small or has not the means to secure good musical teaching, the College may be found to be of great benefit; but an Institution like our own can do all that is necessary to turn out well qualified musical pupils.

The subjects of Instruction may be considered by some to be too extensive; although when it is remembered, that there is no industrial training pursued, and that the pupils are some of the brightest youths out of the schools they come from, we may allow that more subjects of instruction may be taught than in an Institution like our own. "The object of the Institution [as stated in the Committee's report] is to afford "the youthful blind of this country, who have the requisite "talent, a thorough general and musical education, according "to the improved methods employed with marked success "abroad, in order to qualify them to earn a living by various "intellectual pursuits and especially as organists, teachers of music and pianoforte-tuners"; and, on the whole, I think they are taking the best means for securing their object.

II. ARTICLES EXHIBITED FROM BLIND INSTITUTIONS AT THE WORLD'S EXHIBITION OF 1873.

My stay in Vienna was limited to six days—out of this time I was only able to spend rather more than one day in the

Exhibition. The Exhibits from Schools for the Blind were distributed all over the immense building in the various Courts of the countries from which they were sent. Consequently I had not time to examine all carefully, for there were articles exhibited from Institutions for the Blind in Austria, Germany, France, Belgium, Great Britain, Italy, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Spain, Russia, the United States of America, and Cairo. The things exhibited consisted either of appliances for the Education of the Blind or the Products of Blind labour.

Generally the products were such as are usually met with, viz., baskets, brushes, ropes, mats, and articles in knitting, netting, etc.

The appliances and products of one school, that of Copenhagen, I examined more carefully because it was evidently one of the best and because I had the advantage of having the Superintendent of it with me to explain some of the articles. Two appliances made use of in this school seemed to me to deserve notice: these were, first, a small wooden frame to assist blind pupils in writing with a pencil the ordinary Roman type so commonly in use for the Blind in Germany; and, secondly, a small apparatus to guide blind pupils in drawing geometrical figures, where the extent of their education required them to make use of such drawings.

The Basket making and the Brush making of this School were much the same as in our own; the basket making perhaps not quite so good as ours.

The Rope and mat-work were especially good.

One branch of industrial work in this Institution is specially worthy of note. I refer to boot and shoe making. The Superintendent told me that generally he had about 15 pupils learning this handicraft. They cut out and do all the sewing,

nailing, &c. themselves. They have patterns in wood for the cutting out, and special tools for the various other operations. The patterns and tools did not seem to be expensive. Mr. Moldenhawer, the Superintendent, assured me, that several pupils were, with a little help, making a moderate livelihood at this occupation, especially those located in the country districts. They are taught to mend as well as to make, and it is at this process that they get most employment. One or two other Institutions also teach this trade. Judging from the Exhibits from the Royal Blind Institution of Copenhagen, which I have thus dwelt on, I should say that both the Intellectual and Industrial Departments are in a most healthy state of activity. It is one of the Institutions for the Blind which has had a first rank medal—the progress Medal—awarded to it by the Jury of the Exhibition.

Before leaving the question of other Institutions I may state that I visited, while on the Continent, the Royal Institution for the Blind, at Munich; the Imperial Institution for the Blind at Vienna; and the Jewish Institution for the Blind at Hohe Warte, near Vienna.

In the two former I did not notice any features which demanded particular attention. They seem to be conducted much in the same manner as our own schools—only they appear to be better supplied, in point of numbers, with teachers. On this question I made many inquiries, and from all I could learn I find that this is the case in most Continental and American schools. The schools are generally state supported, and so are able to procure funds for a larger staff of teachers.

The schools were better supplied than ours with relief maps for the teaching of Geography, and models of animals in wood were to be found in most Institutions.

The Institution for Jewish Blind Children at Hohe Warte is quite a new Institution, founded mainly at the expense of Baron von Konigswarter, a rich Austrian Jew. It has all the appliances and fittings which might be expected in an entirely new Institution.

III. THE VIENNA CONGRESS.

The first European Congress of the Superintendents and teachers of Institutions for the Blind, was held at Vienna, on 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th of August last. Dr. Frankl, Director of the Jewish Institution for the Blind in Vienna, was the President. Eighty four representatives attended who were from almost every country in Europe and from the United States of America. I myself was the only delegate from England. On each day, except the first, papers were read, and discussions held, on various subjects connected with the education of the Blind.

A short epitome of some of the more interesting papers I proceed to give.

Mr. Moldenhawer, the Superintendent of the Royal Institution in Copenhagen, read a paper on "Why the practical results attained in the education of the Blind are not more universal?"

He pointed out that the very favourable results, which in the cases of some blind people have been obtained, we ought to aim at having in the greatest possible number of cases; that we may hope to reach this end by the application of the same general rules to the education of the Blind as to that of the seeing; that seeing children are educated from 6 or 7 years of age, but blind children only from 10 or 12; that most parents, especially in the lower ranks of life, from mistaken kindness, from too great anxiety, from want of resolution,

or from sheer neglect, and in spite of printed advice and directions and of even personal counsel, do comparatively nothing for the training of their blind children; that, in Saxony, at Hubertisburg, through the efforts of the late veteran in the education of the Blind, Dr. Georgi, a preparatory school for young blind children from 5, or 6 years of age had been founded and was shewing the most favourable results; that in Copenhagen too, a society called "the Kette" has undertaken the same work, and that the Congress ought to urge the founding of such schools in all countries.

He next adverted to the fact that seeing children are sent to school, for education solely between the ages of 6 and 14; but that blind children are expected to be educated and taught some handicraft in about 7 or 8 years; he considered, that the fact that some in so short a time do so well, is great encouragement for those who would do more for the education of the Blind; he would not exchange the plan, by which the Blind are educated and taught some handicraft at the same time, for the plan in use among seeing children, only he would like to have a longer period allotted to the trade instruction. Finally he urges, the desirableness of founding Preparatory Schools, and the establishment of workshops for the Blind, in which they can be helped a little, before they are expected to be entirely dependent on their own efforts.

On this paper I may be allowed to remark that undoubtedly those, who have had practical experience in any school for the blind will admit, that preparatory schools would be productive of much good. The utter ignorance, which characterizes many children admitted to the School for the Blind at 10, 12, or even 14 years of age—and the strange habits which they have contracted, and which at first sight might lead one to fancy there was something idiotic about them, shew the need in many cases of much earlier training.

Herr Roemer, the Superintendent of the Preparatory School for the Blind at Hubertisburg, also read a paper on the need of such Preparatory Schools and detailed his own experience, confirming in the main what the author of the previous paper had said.

The Congress regarded the question as a very important one, and I have heard since that another such school has been founded in Vienna.

Herr Pablasek, the Director of the Imperial Institution for the Education of the Blind, Vienna, read an exceedingly thoughtful paper on the Musical Education of the Blind. He detailed the various ways in which musically instructed blind pupils fail after they leave the school; many seeing people, who have undergone musical instruction fail in the same way; that as it would be unfair to use this as an argument against teaching music to the seeing—so is it equally unfair to use it against musical instruction for the blind; it is found that in some Schools for the Blind only singing is taught—in others singing with piano and organ, and in others most kinds of musical instruments. He then goes on to shew, that blindness does not produce talent for music—nor does it, as some would argue, of necessity exclude them from the highest efforts of musical genius. He would have musical pupils taught some handicraft, it would not prejudicially interfere with their musical pursuits and he would have those also who do not intend to follow music as a profession, taught music, if they possess any ear for music, as it would tend to soothe their dreariness. More especially in the highest ranges of education for the blind should music form an important part; for music, poetry, and religion are the only means by which we can raise the blind to a life that deserves the name. He stated that there

is much difference of opinion as to the expediency of extending musical instruction to orchestral and other portable instruments—it is so extended in the Institutions at Vienna, Munich, Berlin, Berne, Milan, and Paris—but *not*, in those at Linz, Stuttgart, Duerren, Lausanne, Padua, and Nancy. He next gave quotations from reports shewing that musical instruction is not extended to portable instruments in the latter Institutions because it would give facilities to the pupils when dismissed the school to gain a livelihood by degrading themselves to the condition of begging or strolling players.

He then gave other quotations shewing that a good moral education, founded on religion, with the addition of thoroughly good musical instruction, is a sufficient safeguard against this consequence and he himself considered the latter to be the just view of the case. He argued that abuse of musical instruction is the exception, and said that “where, from want of means for “a good and profound musical instruction and from want of “love of it, musical instruction is excluded or limited, false “reasons should not be assigned as an excuse.”

The Congress voted that

(1.) Musical instruction should be among the principal branches of Blind Education.

(2.) That it ought not to be limited to singing.

(3.) That it should not be limited to singing, piano, and organ.

(4.) That it should also be extended to other instruments.

Dr. Reinhardt, Director of the Royal Dresden Blind Institute, read a paper on “Technical training of the Blind and care for them after they are dismissed the school.”

It is a paper, that seems to me to possess much matter of interest—of which the following is a short summary.

In the Dresden Institution training in a handicraft commences on entering the school and proceeds simultaneously with the general education. Basket and Rope making are the only two handicrafts taught, because they require no help from seeing workmen. The Dresden Institute acts on the principle of giving the pupil back to society and does not look with any favour on Asylums for the Blind. Of the 250 former pupils of the Institution spread over the whole country (Saxony), subsisting honourably, Dr. Reinhardt undertakes to say that not one would desire to live in an Asylum, and he asserts, that he could support *four* such pupils out in the world for the sum that *one* individual would cost in an Asylum. The Director often visits the homes of his pupils (Railway travelling is free to him, his officers, and pupils) and so finds out the needs of the district and the circumstances and character of the pupils' friends.

In preparing the pupils for their future work, the trade instructors keep in view the aim of teaching the pupils to make the most saleable articles. The pupils usually leave school at from 18 to 20 years of age; now comes the time of trial. How many who have now been entirely left to themselves have fallen! He says "the Blind as well as the seeing are most likely to persevere in virtue, religion, and industry, the only sources of man's happiness, if in a free and honourable occupation, he exercises his powers and receives the due compensation; but in consequence of his defect he is only fit for that occupation in a limited measure, and those only are able to supply that deficiency, who are acquainted with his wants, his practical abilities, his spiritual and bodily state,

and they can be no others, than those, who have studied his character for years, the managers of the Institute." On this principle the Dresden Institution acts, and the duty it has imposed upon itself is quite clear. This duty it discharges in something like the following manner. Before a youth leaves, the Director if he has not done so already, makes inquiries as to his home, whether his friends are desirable people for him to live with, whether his work is likely to sell there, &c., and sends him there or finds some other locality for him as the case may be. If the friends of the dismissed pupil raise objections to his going to the district pointed out by the school, they are given to understand that their refusal will lead to the withdrawal of the school's support—this representation usually has the desired effect. Each one dismissed has given to him a complete outfit of clothing, bed and bedding, tools and materials. This outfit is provided from three sources, viz., (1) A special Fund; (2) From the savings of the pupil while in the Institution, and (3) from one single contribution from the community to which the pupil belongs. Then some influential friend in the neighbourhood, to which the pupil is sent, is, if possible, secured to give the protégé help by counsel or advice. After a year's time the Director or his representative visits the pupil—or before the lapse of a year if required—and if support is needed it is given, though not in the form of alms, but rather in procuring sale for his goods. Some former pupils have succeeded so well that they have acquired no inconsiderable property; in some cases the Institution has helped them by procuring for them a loan, on proper security, at about 4 per cent, payment of the interest of which is regularly insisted upon, although in some cases, as a reward for industry and steadiness, such interest has been returned. Dr. Reinhardt states that over 200 former pupils are in this way doing well.

He then details the way in which the special Fund for helping the Blind after leaving the Institution is raised; and so concludes what seems to me a most valuable and interesting paper.

On the question of a common type for the blind two papers were read—one by Director von St. Marie of Leipzig, and the other by Mr. Wait of New York. Both excited much discussion—but I do not propose to do more at present than to state, that so far as I could gather, the general opinion of the Congress was in favour of what is called a Point system being introduced into all schools. The chief question in dispute was whether the system to be recommended should be that of Braille, the only system now used in France, or that, which goes by the name of the New York type, invented by Mr. Wait, the Superintendent of the New York Institution for the Blind.

The matter was finally referred to a sub-committee with instructions to examine the two systems carefully and report upon them.

Towards the conclusion of the Congress, M. Lavanchy, the founder of the Institution for the Blind at Cairo and a delegate from that city, made a very forcible address on the condition of the Blind in the East. The Congress on this question passed the following Resolution :

“It seems desirable that the first European Congress of the Conductors of Institutions for the Blind should express itself on the necessity of calling into existence in the East institutions for the education and assistance of the Blind similar to those in Europe and America. To this end it would be advisable to draw up an address to the Sultan and the Khedive, in order to invite their respective governments to take into consideration the condition of the great number of

blind in the East. These addresses should be brought to the knowledge of these illustrious personages through delegates and through their respective ambassadors.”

A permanent standing Committee, consisting of five Viennese members and two others from Institutions not in Vienna, was appointed—its sittings to be held in Vienna; and the next Congress was appointed to be held at Dresden in the year 1876. I think there is every reason to hope that those who are spared to take part in that Congress will find that the Congress of 1873 has been productive of valuable results in the general education and condition of the Blind.

Turning now to the practical side of the question before I conclude, I should like to call attention to two most important questions as regards ourselves;

I. The Introduction of the point type.

II. The state of musical instruction, including the teaching of pianoforte tuning.

On the question of type I may say that, under the superintendence of the Rev. W. Taylor and down to a very recent date, the only type systematically taught in this school was the Roman capitals,* either what are known as Fry's or Alston's. Then in about 1863 Moon's type was introduced for the boys. So that in 1869 when I was appointed your Superintendent I found the girls being taught the Roman and the boys only Moon's. Clearly this was an anomaly.

*The Council of the British and Foreign Blind Association have expressed their opinion as follows :—“The Roman character in all its existing forms is so complicated that it requires long education and great acuteness of touch to read it with ease, and its universal adoption would be tantamount to the total exclusion of the great majority of the blind from the privilege of Reading.”

It is now pretty generally admitted that the type invented by Dr. Moon is much easier than any form of Roman type. The adult blind, as a rule prefer it—so do our own pupils. Boys whose hands are hardened by basket-work can feel it, when they are quite at a loss with the Roman. And seeing that, in various parts of Yorkshire, libraries for the Blind have been founded, consisting of books in this type, mainly at the expense of Sir Charles Lowther, Bart., it is quite evident that we must teach it at York. Our plan at the present time is to teach both types, the stay of the pupils in school for 7 years affording quite sufficient time to do this.

In addition I should recommend the introduction of a Point system. There seems to me no doubt that ultimately it will become a very important system in the education of the Blind.

Its advantages are :

- (1). It is very easily felt ;
- (2). It takes up much less space than other systems ;
- (3). It can be written by the Blind, and what one blind person has written another person can read ;
- (4). It is useful for Musical Notation, which no other system is. At Vienna Exhibition I saw several volumes of music in this type.

The Council of the British and Foreign Blind Association consisting of educated blind gentlemen, after having carefully examined all systems of printing for the blind, came to the conclusion that a Point system is undoubtedly the best. They are at present investigating the merits of the two rival systems and purpose making the results of their investigations public in due course.

I have myself spent some time in examining the two systems, and consider that the New York one in regard to the principles upon which a Point system ought to be founded

is the better. I purpose testing the two systems in the school, merely by way of experiment—awaiting the decision of the British and Foreign Blind Association and the report of the Vienna Sub-committee and then recommending to the Committee the adoption of either the one or the other to be regularly taught in the school.

2. I come now to the question of our musical teaching. Music as a part of a system of education in an Institution for the Blind must be regarded in two aspects.

(1). As a means of education in a general sense, for humanizing and civilizing our pupils.

(2). As the teaching of an art by means of which the pupils may in after life earn a livelihood. The rules of the school enjoin the teaching of music for both these objects (Rules 43 and 44).

Now with regard to the second of these, it is important to notice that several of those former pupils of the school who are doing the best for themselves in life, who are the least burden to their friends, and are occupying the most respectable positions are those, who are employed as organists. teachers of music, pianoforte tuners, and music dealers. Hence it follows, that we can scarcely estimate too highly the importance of offering a good musical education.

The careful teaching of Mr. Barnby cannot be too highly spoken of, and the results of his work, all allow, do him very great credit; but I should like to see him working with more assistance, and I therefore offer the following suggestions with regard to the musical training in the school.

1. That all pupils, who have an ear for music should be put under musical instruction at once—on entering the school.

At present, it is two and often three years after the pupil's admission, before he can receive instruction in music. The seven years of their stay in school is certainly not too long to be undergoing musical instruction, when it is borne in mind, that, in their cases, every piece of music has to be committed to memory. The reason for not being put under musical instruction at once is, that Mr. Strickland, the assistant music teacher, has not time to take more than a limited number. How then can the musical teaching power of the school be increased, and can it be done without much increased cost? I think it can.

2. After a pupil has had instruction in music, say for one or two years, it should be determined by Mr. Barnby whether he will be likely to succeed so well in it as to warrant his being educated with a view to his making use of it as a means of livelihood. If not, then he should be put to either basket or brush-making. If he does seem likely to succeed, then the remaining period of his stay in school should be spent with this end in view.

3. Then arises the question how shall the time of these musical pupils be spent for the remainder of their stay at school. In this manner I think.

a. In further instruction in music ;

b. In continued instruction in school ; for our musical pupils should have the best intellectual teaching we can give.

c. In learning the art of pianoforte tuning. To this art at the present time we only devote about one lesson per week during the pupil's last half year at school ; whereas, in the Paris School for the Blind, where they are most successful in turning out good tuners, they provide for teaching in this art during 3 years.

d. In teaching music to the younger pupils.

This will be of importance in two ways. In the first place, it will increase the teaching power of the school and give us the opportunity of placing pupils under musical instruction on their entering the school; and, in the second place, it will be a useful training to the teacher himself in the art of teaching the pianoforte, which we are to suppose he will pursue in after life.

There is one more question, on which I would fain say a few words before I close my report—that is, the general question of the education of the Blind. In my intercourse with the various superintendents whom I met during the past year, both Continental and American, I inquired whether the pupils under their care were receiving a better education than their seeing brothers and sisters at home. In all cases I received replies in the affirmative. I believe too that the pupils in our own school also receive a better education than their brothers and sisters at home; but I have reason for believing that, generally, the blind in England do not get so good an education as they do in some schools on the continent and in America. That the Blind need a thoroughly good education a moment's consideration of their case will convince us: even to enable them to earn a livelihood by means of handicraft, to do without sight, what their seeing brethren do with sight, it is surely necessary that we should, if possible, compensate their deficiency by a better education.

We should also bear in mind that there are occupations (besides musical) in which sight is not by any means so necessary as it is in a handicraft. Such occupations however require, for conducting them successfully, energy, tact, perseverance, and sharpened intelligence. Surely, where we

find such qualities of mind to exist, it ought to be our duty to prepare our pupils for such occupations, by giving them the best education in our power. And to our musical pupils also, if we would not have them degrade their talents to entertaining the company of low public houses, we must give a good education.

There is yet one more consideration which should induce us to cultivate carefully and well the mental powers of the Blind and that is, that by the mere loss of sight they are thrown more than the seeing on their mental resources for their happiness. To enlighten the eyes of their minds so as to enable them to perceive and enjoy the beauties of the inner world must surely ever be one of the great aims of all who have charge of the education of the Blind.

I have the honour to remain,

Gentlemen,

Your Obedient Servant,

A. BUCKLE.

(*Superintendent.*)

Manor House, March 9th, 1874.

APPENDIX.

The following translation of a passage from Herr Pablasek's paper, on the Education of the Blind in Music, will, I hope, be found to possess sufficient interest, to warrant my giving it *in extenso*.

He quotes from a Vienna paper "der Heilpaedagog"—as ably representing the views of those who differ from him. I quote also his remarks on the same.

"A blind man will never be able to produce composition which will stand the test of ages; nor will he ever be able to reach the highest point of reproduction, and become what Ernst, Spohr, Remengi, &c., have been, in the reproduction of immortal musical creations. To produce an artist in the full meaning of the word, requires a perfect man with the full treasure of all his senses. When we consider that a blind man with an educated talent sinks himself completely in the domain of sounds, and, that by practice, the relations of sounds become as easy to him as the proportions of numbers to an arithmetician, and, that he is less subject to outward distractions, it will be no wonder that he can receive more musical representations than any one with all his senses, and has a memory for sounds which receives rapidly whole musical works. The perfectly educated touch also comes to his help, together with the enhanced need of full occupation for his

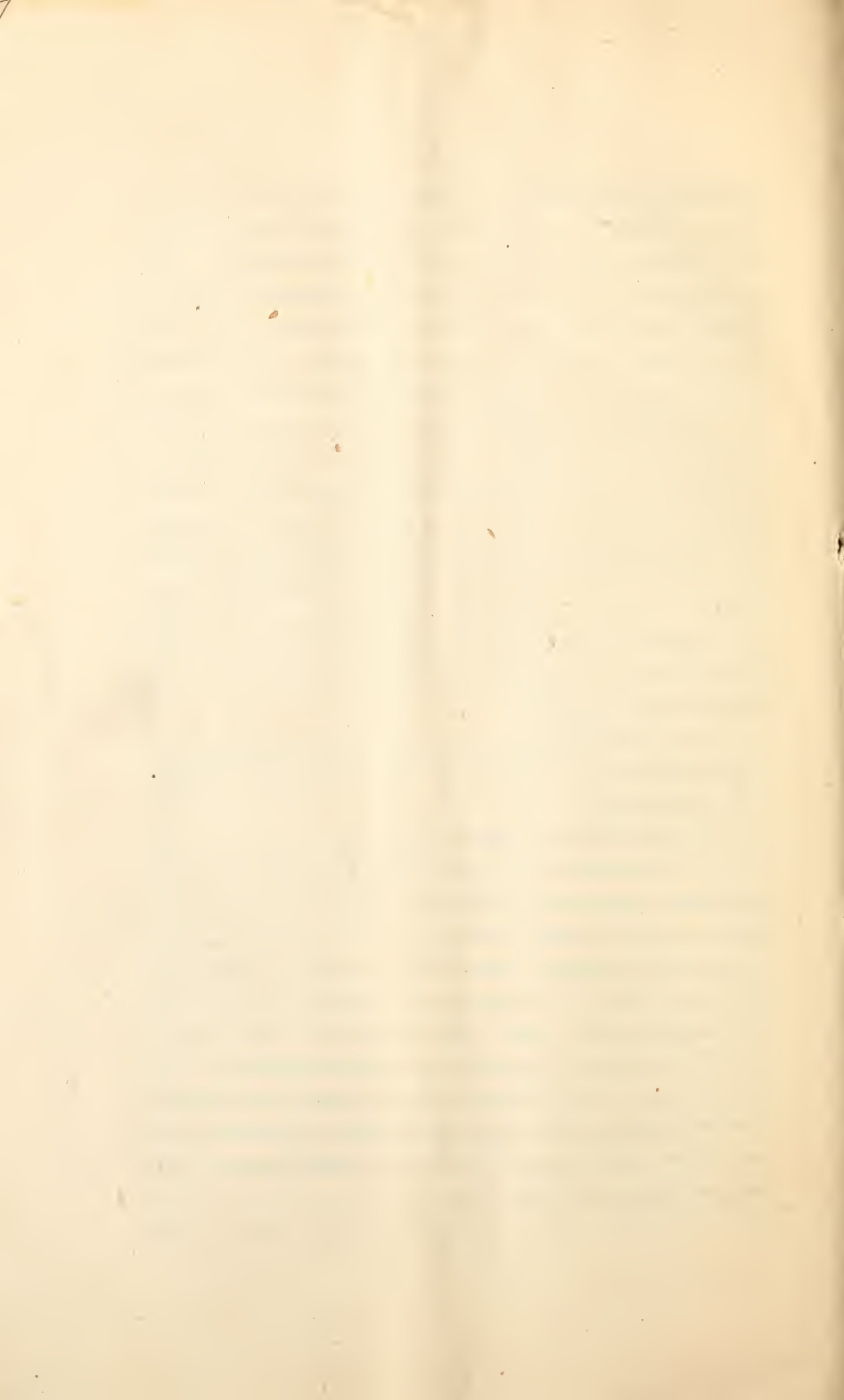
thoughts. And here we cannot well avoid the question, how it comes to pass that the blind man does not reach a much higher point in respect of touch even, than what a man fully gifted hardly suspects. The answer is simple :—No human sense is independent ; all our senses are closely bound together [bedingen sich]—and this is specially the case with the eye and the ear, which are most intimately united to each other. The great composer and the great poet represent the highest power of mental force ; but in the soul of the poet there exists all the glow of the colour wealth of nature, while as regards the composer, a simple melody can conjure for him all the world of dreams. The greater the province of æsthetical experience, of the accumulated treasure of beautiful forms, so much the greater is the means at the command of the artist. And if art is the mirror of the human soul, a blind man will never be able to give his productions the proper harmonious finish. The accomplished connoisseur will be uncomfortably touched with a certain sickly paleness in the composition, with an oppressive monotony. He will fail to find in it the clear reflecting eye, the glitter of light, and the whole will have the effect of a misty grey twilight. The composition of the blind will want above all objectivity, and glow of colour.”

“These thoughts (Herr Pablasek observes) thus proved as they are, have not as regards the blind an absolute and unexceptional application ; for only the smallest proportion are blind either from birth or from their earliest years, the greater number have carried with them into their darkened life remembrances of the visible world with its adornment of colour and richness of forms and this remembrance answers the same purpose to the blind musician that it does to the blind poet. Poetry certainly has an equally high claim in the whole man as music has, and yet the blind poets Homer, Ossian, and Milton, stand with their immortal creations, full of the most

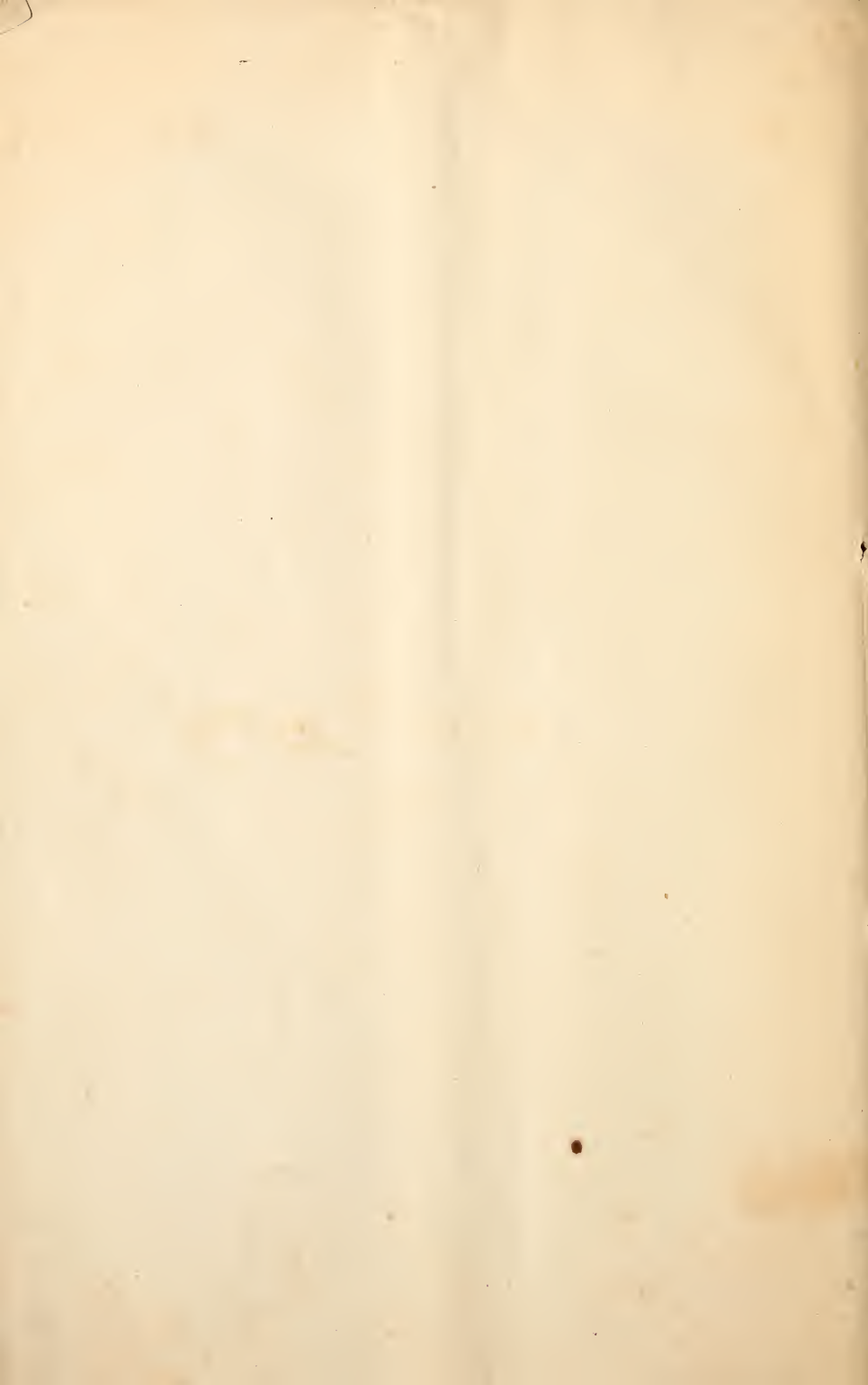
charming colour painting, on the very summit of Parnassus. The born blind, or one blind from very early years undoubtedly as compared with a musician with all his senses suffers a loss with respect to his means for musical composition; but the greater acuteness of the other senses, the more lively imagination, the more concentrated power of thought and judgment as well as a gigantic memory compensate in part for this deficiency, and enable him according to the larger or smaller measure of innate or cultivated gifts for production or reproduction of musical compositions to attain a higher or lower degree of perfection in art. As a proof of this I may mention Therese von Paradies and Fraulein von Salignac, Sophie Osmon and Dulon, and in more recent times Proksch in Prague, Zachreis, Labor, Rengstl, Lackner and others in Vienna, who although blind from an early period of life, as artists on their instruments, as composers and as music teachers have received full acknowledgement."

"I may instance among others the following judgement on Ludwig Lackner, in No. 8 of the previously mentioned "Heilpaedagog."

"At the head of the programme, &c., &c., stood a symphony of L. Lackner, the effect of which was absolutely striking and manifested a power far above the average. Profound study, plastic thought, imagination, richness of means, and above all a great ideal aspiration were evident, so that the immediately following *Concerto* of Vieuxtemps, perfectly as it was performed, was thrown into the shade. The composer of this symphony is a blind youth of Vienna, of most amiable disposition. He is the possessor of the first prize (of the Vienna Conservatorium) for composition, and the second for violin playing, he has a most splendid memory for music and the decided character of an approaching true artist."







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The first European Congress of the
directors and instructors of insituti^a
ons for the blind

Vienna August 1873.

Date Due

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The frist European
Congress of the directors
and instructors of institutions
for the blind . Vienna 1873

AUTHOR

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